

# As to That Watch Tower on Capitol Hill

By A. R. PINCI

WHAT do the American women want now? That's what members of Congress would like to know. But they would like to know it by the old-fashioned method, as man to woman or, to be exact, as woman to man, and not by the new-fangled political processes operating, legally, through constitutional amendment. The mere fact that women are labeling their wants by means of the vote, or the power of the vote, is creating consternation in the manly breasts of our legislators, not only in the District of Columbia, but in forty-eight state capitals, too.

So Congressmen are worried by the threatened militant activity of the new Woman's Party, which has decided to erect a "Watch Tower" on Capitol Hill, a few hundred yards from the two Houses. And to prove that they are in earnest, the suffragettes have bought more real estate, which is going some these days in Washington, D. C.

Of course, all is not peaceful and serene within the women's camp or camps, because it seems that there are many of them, distinguished by differing purposes. While the first pronouncement is for a constitutional amendment which would make it compulsory for the President to appoint a woman to the Supreme Court of the United States—a sort of woman's bill of rights—the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage has called on President Harding to urge his opposition "to issues not related to the Nineteenth Amendment."

President Harding, some time last year, let it be known that he looked with favor upon the plan of including women in the foreign service of the United States, in the belief that they could be very useful in commercial activities abroad. But in contrast there stands the official action of the British Government, just announced (which proves that women elsewhere are on the jump), by which the Civil Service Commission reserves to men all posts in the diplomatic, consular and commercial service.

## Want to Sit on Juries

THE Woman's Party is anxious for legislation which will establish the right of women to sit on juries in every state and Federal court, yet within one week in June one lawyer excused women from jury service in Cincinnati because "the record so far in criminal cases has shown that female jurors always are for conviction; women are merciless, much more so than men," while in Chicago the question came up whether or not women, despite enfranchisement, are the peers of men. Although the attorney for the Cook County jury commissioners did not deny woman's fitness to serve in the rôle of juror, he pointed out that for "1,000 years the laws of England and the United States have specified trials by twelve men—a rule as hide-bound as the code of the Medes and Persians." He denied that a woman is man's peer.

Along comes a noted New York woman who says that "suffrage simply makes things worse. There were too many politicians in this country before the women got the vote. The women are using suffrage to vent their jealousies and spite and to promote personal ambitions."

That all is not smooth sailing with the women may be proved, however, by the plan of the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church a few weeks ago, to bar women from all activity, including foreign missions, Christian Endeavor supervision, attendance at assemblies, and speaking in churches.

London meanwhile announces that five pounds sterling, about twenty dollars today, and no more, is to be the price of a wife in Liberia, according to a recently ratified convention between Great Britain and Liberia, but even at that price, not a bargain by any means, women's rights are to be recognized, for the convention expressly provides that no claim can be made in respect of a woman except by her husband, and that "no woman can be compelled to return to a claimant against her will."

There seems to be a cross-current of purposes, as between women and women, men and men, and women and men. Perhaps that's why the women of America are "out again" and on the warpath. Officials and politicians, especially those who cannot be one without being the other, had hoped that the Nineteenth Amendment would have satisfied the women, but the renewed promise of the suffragettes that their hats—and don't forget the hatpins—are once more in the ring has dismayed them. Worst of all, the lone Congresswoman in their midst speaketh not.

## Eve Cast the First Vote

IT IS difficult to account for the renewed uneasiness of public men. The novelty of woman in a man's world is now uninteresting. There is no use getting excited about what men are not going to do shortly before they make ready to do it. For a long time the men temporarily in power refused to give the women the vote—which refusal did not last long—and those strenuous objectors were probably the very men who wore scarlet underwear because the woman of the house said so, and they took paregoric because she believed in the remedy, and ate fried brains and made out he was pleased while his stomach ached for Frankfurters. Those were the men who yielded to some woman every moment of their lives—except in the hallowed precincts of Senate or House.

It is nettling for a man to admit that the joke is on the men. A "chicken" with her head on can make an official act like a chicken with his head off. Now there is nothing humorous about woman's activities in politics and government, in this country or in other countries, and whatever comicalities are obvious are rather contributed or made possible by man.

Eve cast the first vote recorded in behalf of her sex. An amateur scientist said it was not exactly a vote, but a spell which she cast, and which he termed "feminite,"

and which remains dormant unless it mixes the right proportions of "mannitis." But be that as it may, it is well known that there was some question as between Eve and Adam as to whether they should partake of the forbidden fruit, and it is equally well known, alas for man, that when the matter came to a vote Eve carried it. The "eyes" had it. She has carried it ever since. It does not help matters at all to say that the *tabernaculum dichotoma*, good before they ate it, has been poisonous ever since, and that the indentation in the hind suggests the guilty toothmarks of she who voted not wisely but too well! All that is pertinent is that woman has outvoted man from the very beginning.

If man disregards woman's vote he is going to get in trouble. If there is an unbeliever it is only necessary to refer him to the eloquent admission of William Hohenzollern, when he was Emperor of Germany, who in a diary wrote as follows:

"I do not know what is the matter with me. For the first time in my life I find myself thinking constantly about a woman. It is the Countess Sophy von Goertz." A month afterward, April 6, 1902, the monarch, after having confessed his love, was amazed to hear her say: "Will you give up your plans of world conquest? Oh, if you do, all I have is yours and my love besides!"

This request angered Emperor William. He did not see her again until the following November, when she was dying. Again the Emperor told of his love.

"You would not sacrifice any of your plans and designs for my sake," she reproached.

And this is how the monarch himself analyzed the situation a few hours after her death:

"If ever I loved anybody, it was Sophy Goertz, but when she asked me to give up for her sake all the ambitions I had been imprudent enough to confide to her, I am glad that I did not hesitate and that I rather sacrificed her, and my love for her, than what I owed to my country and to my people. Germany must become the world-wide power it is destined to be, and it must become such during my reign, if only as a compensation for all that I have sacrificed for its sake."

Thus Emperor William was a conspicuous example among millions of man's unwillingness to abide by what Ruskin calls woman's power for sweet ordering and decision. It brought disaster to this world of ours. The countess had no way of "voting" in favor of her own judgment except by plain speech, which was the one thing monarchs have resented.

Thus we come to the subtle difference between the actual and potential vote of woman. Merely as a phase of politics and government it is one thing, and a very superficial thing; as a guiding influence in invisible ways in her own sphere it is another thing, all pervading and beautiful. Man, generally yielding to the latter influence, goes on the warpath as soon as it is translated into a vested legal right.

## How the Women Win

EVERY mother's son, be he a Senator, an alderman, a deputy, a wai wu pu, a prefect, a chancellor, a mayor—will be quite susceptible to the wishes of the woman or women who are his relations or friends, and each word by these women is a feminine vote. He doesn't know it, but it is. Yet as soon as these selfsame ladies want to register perhaps the same views in a booth by means of an X-mark instead of at the breakfast table or while driving or on a sofa, then the men become stark crazy.

Of course there is a reason for this feeling. And on the men's part, it is a good reason. The women should be flattered by it. The hardest champion of woman's rights must admit that man's opposition in the matter is not solely a question of selfishness. It traces its origin, rather, to the instinct of knighthood, sometimes crudely or grotesquely manifested, but none the less compelling.

For such opposition the women themselves are to blame. The first and most militant women's rights representatives were not very good for sore eyes to look upon. Who does not remember the masculine woman with the long stride, the tweed suit, the swinging arms, the big-booted feet, her pockets and stiff collar, her crush hat and seal ring? Their hearts were all right, but their appearances were against them. One or more of such women calling on a defenseless Congressman or governor made him wish for chromatopseudoblepsis, nyctalopia and all the other opias.

The fear which statesmen have of women is no product of the present times. Has any one forgotten Cardinal Mazarin's comment, as he was about to return to France after attending to a state matter, that there was no rest back home, because "female politicians" were more dreaded than the male? Doesn't it sound like a quotation from our own Congressional Record?

What the woman with the seal ring on her index finger and hand-sewed heels on her boots and mannish suit could not accomplish by means of prize-fighting methods, the sweet young things a generation later cajoled men into giving them. Uncle "Joe" Cannon knew. So do some others of the old-timers. One of them exactly sixteen years, seven months, and nineteen days before the time of writing, known as one of the leading fishing enthusiasts of Congress, referred to a certain suffrage representative as a whale. That same man has lived to see a different breed; something like the fighting fish of Siam, that when quiet are dull but when excited or after something their colors glow with metallic splendor. Perhaps that's why we have metallic dress goods.

Naturally a little thing like a constitutional amendment could not destroy the inherent antagonism be-

tween the sexes. While deluded males thought all was right with the world, they have received another jolt by seeing the Woman's Party refurbish itself and the country for another campaign. And the men who are holding jobs by virtue of the vote, or by grace of a power that has its origin in suffrage, are beginning to wonder what's coming next. The Watch Tower on Capitol Hill does not seem very reassuring to men whose tasks in the past were soporific. They know something's coming, and needless to say, with women implicated, they cannot guess what.

They are truly in a panic. It seems silly, too, that able-bodied monarchs of all they survey, when women are not around, should be stamped by so innocuous beings as the more deadly of the species.

A few days ago in a conversation with a member of Congress the question of suffrage came up. He was one of the unyielding opponents all the while the question was before Congress—until he married. He married a few months before ratification. His bride "voted" him in favor of the Nineteenth Amendment. He himself admits it, though perhaps unaware of the marvelous potentialities of woman over mere man, sometimes. Yet he was bewailing the times. He wished he had been called into this world a couple of generations sooner. In the movies he had seen pictures of American homes, North and South, before the fifties, and he felt that the women of those days, with their lace gloves, their ten-inch sunshades, their domesticity, and the like, were not worrying the legislators of their day with "insane requests for this and that."

## On the Vote for War

HE EVIDENTLY had overlooked, in his feeling, the exact measure of influence exerted over the men by their women in those days, of which the literature of the times is rich in examples. It seems to many that the principles which led to the Civil War beset the women more than the men. It is undoubtedly true that the women of the South, a trifle more reserved, more feminine, and more unassuming, in comparison to their harder northern sisters, became the dominant figures that led to war, and every chronicle of the times bears out this fact. If that was not an indirect but withal a vote for war—what was it?

It has been my privilege, for twenty years, to meet men whose names have figured very prominently, and some still do, in the world's news. In many cases I have known their women. Every one of them, as far as information of this nature can be traced, has been an admirer of the women of his immediate circle. It was these women, after all, who made them. Excepting those men whose tradition or religion actually ostracized woman, not one of them has truly carried out uninfluenced masculine ideas and plans, whether for better or for worse. Behind their work there has been a woman or the dream of one.

In the case of one of the most inaccessible diplomats—and I am speaking of days before the war, when public men had no reason to be nice to members of the press—it was by mere chance that I stumbled upon the secret of what put me in possession of much valuable information, and it had to do with some innocent bit of gossip.

"Ah!" laughed he, replacing his monocle which mirth had displaced, "my wife will enjoy that."

Thus I knew that he was one statesman subject to a superstatesman—or is it superstateswoman—and thenceforth I never went back unless I carried with me an excellent bit of gossip.

There is no way of eliminating this interdependence between the sexes. Nero was one who tried it, when he feared the ascendancy of his mother in state matters, and proceeded to do away with her, with disastrous results to himself.

Thus no matter at what point in history we may start, it is quite impossible to single out any outstanding event in which woman's influence does not figure. To repeat, this influence is a vote—and it is the vote. It is the original suffrage method provided by nature, as tough as the bone from which sprang the voter, and of which Adam was the first victim.

It was a lesson for the women; ever since then they have been trying to vote him back into Paradise, or as near to it as they could achieve, and they are still at it.

## Absurd to Get Excited

SO IT does seem on the whole absurd for men to get excited about what women want in the way of votes. The last election did not prove much about women's votes.

Getting down to corner stones, what woman in this country wanted above all was the right to vote. She wanted it because! Now if legislators can explain that because they can perform miracles. They can eliminate taxes.

Women know very well, if the men don't, that the Nineteenth Amendment is merely a safeguard. They are not going to the polls to get anything in particular out of the men, although it may be needed to get something out of other women, and then the fun will begin. As long as woman's ancient method of voting, by suggestion or innuendo, works satisfactorily, she won't bother much about that X-mark (not to be read as a ten-spot) but if he is hard-headed, and things don't go just right, and the country be in danger, then the vote—the formal vote—will come handy.

Much is going to be said about equality and division of responsibility and liability, but just as long as man continues to uncover his head before a woman, that equality cannot be established. That uncovering is a good sign that he considers her a superior being and it gives her a good chance to look into his mind. Buying a watch tower, or whatever it is to be called, to prod the sluggish ones, is persiflage and publicity.